



South Carolina LIVING

SOUTH CAROLINA ROLLS OUT THE GREEN CARPET

Energy-efficient homes will generate new jobs, a cleaner environment and big savings

S.C. SCENE

The season for gaits and fences

S.C. STORIES

On the trail of Gullah-Geechee history

HUMOR ME

Paws and play



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FEATURE 16 The Power of Efficiency

A low-interest loan program to help co-op members improve the energy efficiency of their homes is one step closer to becoming reality. See how the Rural Energy Savings Program may reduce carbon dioxide emissions, create jobs and boost the state's economy.

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Cover collage by
Sharri Wolfgang



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Mission Statement

The aim of Marlboro Electric Cooperative, Inc. is to make electric energy available to its members at the lowest cost consistent with sound economy and good management.



Your Touchstone Energy® Cooperative

Electric Ed 101

Why we provide education, training and information to our members

BY READING THIS COLUMN, you're helping Marlboro Electric Cooperative fulfill the Fifth Cooperative Principle, "Education, Training, and Information," one of seven guidelines that govern cooperative operations.

In fact, right now you're holding one of your co-op's primary conduits of education and information, *South Carolina Living*. Through these pages, we communicate directly with you, our consumer-members, on important co-op business. We also share energy-saving tips to save you money, safety information that could save



your life, economic development news for growth and jobs, community activities and commitments, and much more.

But we don't stop there. We sponsor programs to educate youth in our service areas with local school classes, safety programs, etc.

We also support student education through our Give Us An A program, statewide WIRE scholarship of Women Returning to College, Solar School project, and we send rising high school seniors-to-be to Washington, D.C., for a week every summer as part of the nationally organized Rural Electric Youth Tour. Youth Tour students receive an all-expenses-paid trip to the nation's capital to visit historic sites, see important governmental buildings, meet lawmakers, and learn how our system of government works. To apply for the June 2011 Washington Youth Tour program, applications will be available December 1, 2010–January 31, 2011, at MarlboroElectric.coop/YouthTour or contact Christy Overstreet at (843) 479-3855.

Our education efforts extend to our employees as well as you can read

about it on page 20C. We encourage and support them in taking courses to improve on-the-job skills through our state organization, the Electric Cooperatives of South Carolina, Inc., or the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association, the Arlington, Va.-based national service organization representing more than 900 consumer-owned, not-for-profit electric cooperatives, public power districts, and public utility districts in the United States. We believe well-trained employees are more valuable to the co-op and can provide you, our members, with the high quality of service you've come to expect.

We also sponsor safety seminars for our linemen, field workers and office personnel. This education is vital to keeping our workforce safe and reduces costs involved with lost-time accidents.

Keeping you informed—so you can learn to manage your energy use or understand how your co-op employees are working to better serve you—is one of our most important responsibilities. That's the cooperative difference.

Janelle Sauls

Trustee, Secretary/Treasurer



MEC's lineworker Steve Ellerbe talks to students at McColl Elementary about safety.

Co-op cleans green

Momar, Inc. honors MEC



CHRISTY OVERSTREET

Momar salesman J.P. Dowd, center, presents the GreenAction award to co-op employees Jerry Murphy, left, John Powers and William Penn.

MARLBORO ELECTRIC was awarded a certificate from Momar, Incorporated for serving as a Greenaction Facility. This is one of the many ways your local co-op has demonstrated active environmental stewardship and dedication in going “green.”

By utilizing cleaning products that have minimized the effects on environmental and human health, the goal in selecting a green disinfectant or sanitizer is to move from a more hazardous product to a less hazardous alternative. A product can be defined as “green” when its impact on health and the environment is less than that of comparable products used for the same purpose.

Green-action

products, provided by Momar Incorporated, have been formulated in a national effort and partnership with the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) to use safer chemistry in effective product formulations.

Momar, Incorporated, a specialty manufacturer of general maintenance and sanitation chemicals, founded in Atlanta, Georgia, in 1947, continues to grow with industry-leading research and advanced product development of green products.

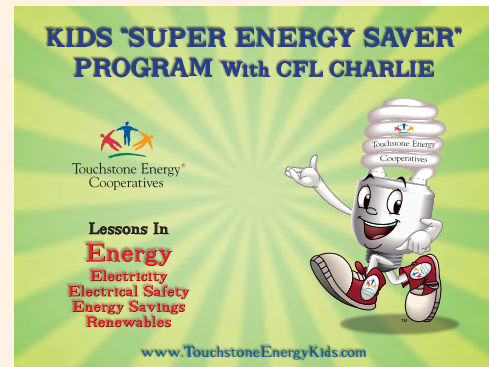
For more local co-op information, see the MEC News EXTRA on pages 20A–D.



Co-op, ‘CFL Charlie’ teach kids to save energy

October is Cooperative Month and Energy Efficiency Awareness Month, and Marlboro Electric Cooperative is celebrating both by distributing Super Energy Saver educational kits to elementary schools in our service area.

Featuring the Touchstone Energy mascot CFL Charlie, each kit includes “Lessons in Energy” focusing on electrical safety, energy savings and renewable energy resources. The kits’ lessons augment those of another education program co-sponsored by Marlboro Electric Cooperative earlier this



year—the website, PalmettoPower.com.

Marlboro Electric and its generation and transmission co-op, Central Electric Power Cooperative, created the website to offer unique curricula for educators teaching youth about the state of energy in South Carolina.

“Knowledge is power and knowledge about wise energy use is powerful indeed,” says John Powers, manager of information systems/public relations. “That’s why we’re putting these Super Energy Saver kits into the hands of the educators who teach our future co-op members.”

The effort also ties into Cooperative Month, when Marlboro Electric joins cooperatively owned businesses worldwide to highlight “the cooperative difference,” Powers notes. “Co-ops are consumer-owned, not-for-profit businesses that operate by seven Cooperative

Principles. For instance, we provide Education and Information for our member-owners about wise power use, and we show Commitment to Community every day,” he says. Learn more about the Cooperative Principles at CoopMonth.coop.

Marlboro Electric Cooperative is one of more than 700 Touchstone Energy Cooperatives across America. Touchstone Energy co-ops serve members with an emphasis on core values including integrity, accountability, innovation and commitment to community.

Highlights

For a complete listing of Events, see page 36



Walhalla Oktoberfest
DISCOVER UPCOUNTRY

OCTOBER 1-31

Celebrate Oktoberfest

Oktoberfest, the traditional German harvest party, has become a U.S. fall favorite, too, and South Carolinians have multiple choices for authentic German food, music and fun, starting with the ninth annual **Newberry Oktoberfest on Saturday, Oct. 2**. The family-friendly celebration runs from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. in Historic Downtown Newberry with two kid zones featuring inflatable rides, a petting zoo and puppet shows. Not to be outdone, the Oconee County town of **Walhalla hosts its 32nd Oktoberfest from Friday to Sunday, Oct. 15-17**, at Sertoma Field, on S.C. 183. Don't miss the pageants, carnival rides, food, music and authentic German dancers in lederhosen. Need more? **Oktoberfest goes on all month just up the road in Helen, Ga.**, where Alpine Helen's Festhalle opens its massive doors for weeks of bands and beers, pretzels and wurst—at least until the party ends on Sunday, Oct. 31.

For more information, visit newberry.com, (803) 321-1015; walhallachamber.com, (864) 638-2727; and helenga.org, (800) 858-8027.



LARRY GLEASON

OCTOBER 21-30

Western Carolina State Fair

Up-and-coming country band Gloriana will perform on the opening night of Aiken's biggest fall festival. New this year: daily Sea Lion Splash shows. And, of course,

there will be all the usual attractions, arts, crafts, horticulture exhibits, rides and the always-exciting demolition derby.

The Western Carolina State Fair is held at the Aiken Fairgrounds on Columbia Highway North. For details, visit westerncarolinastatefair.com or call (803) 648-8955.



JAMES CAROLINA

NOVEMBER 6

Florence Pecan Festival

Just how big a deal is the annual Pecan Festival? More than 50,000 people are expected to flood downtown Florence to enjoy cook-offs, live entertainment on seven stages, special events for the kids and a "Run Like a Nut" race, which includes a half-marathon.

The Pecan Festival is held in and around downtown Florence. For details, visit florencedowntown.com or call (843) 665-2047.

TOP PICK FOR KIDS

ALL ABOARD!

An old-fashioned steam-engine train ride on a crisp fall day is the perfect family outing. The South Carolina Railroad Museum near Winnsboro is offering just that opportunity as it celebrates Steam Train Days on the weekends of Oct. 16-17 and Oct. 23-24. The seven-mile trip takes about an hour, courtesy of Flagg Coal Company's #75 coal-fired steam engine. Classic freight and passenger cars also are on display and the ride itself costs \$15 per person. Space is limited and advanced reservations are recommended.

The South Carolina Railroad Museum is located off S.C. 34 at 110 Industrial Park Road in Winnsboro. Details at scrm.org or (803) 635-4242.



CAL HARRISON

NOVEMBER 11-13

Penn Center Heritage Days

Penn Center on St. Helena Island was one of the first schools for freed slaves, and is now considered one of the nation's most significant African-American historical institutions. It's also the home of Heritage Days, Beaufort County's annual celebration of Gullah culture, featuring a fish fry, sweetgrass basket weaving, a praise and prayer service, craft fair and live entertainment. This year's events are scheduled to run from Thursday to Saturday, Nov. 11-13, and include an artist of the year exhibition and presentation of the "Flags of the Gullah People" (above).

The Penn School National Historic Landmark District is on St. Helena Island near Beaufort. Details at penncenter.com or (843) 838-2432.



PENN CENTER HERITAGE DAYS

ADOPTION UPDATE

EDITOR'S NOTE: In response to our August feature story on foster care and adoption, we received this letter from Naomi Torfin, executive director of the advocacy group Children Come First.

THE ARTICLE "SAVING SOUTH CAROLINA'S LOST CHILDREN" elicited an outpouring of calls, letters and e-mails to our office. These responses ran the gamut from inspiring stories of families overcoming tragic circumstances to would-be parents asking thoughtful questions about adopting foster children.

It's clear that there are many people who want to help the approximately 5,400 children in state foster care today. Each of these children has a name, a unique personality and a simple desire for a stable, loving home; one where they don't have to fear abuse, worry whether there will be food to eat, or watch the people they love slowly kill themselves with drugs and alcohol. For the more than 1,000

foster children currently eligible for adoption, a permanent home would mean they don't have to keep their bags packed, always wondering when the next move is coming or who their "next family" will be.

If someone in just 1 percent of the nearly 500,000 homes that receive *South Carolina Living* decided to help one child by becoming a foster or adoptive parent, almost every foster child in the state would face a brighter future.

Unfortunately, many people who might open their homes to children in need mistakenly believe that foster children are somehow "damaged." As both an advocate for children and a former foster child myself, I frequently assure potential parents that the issue is not just the child, but the overwhelming challenges the child endures. Foster care removes children from the acute threats of abuse and neglect, but adoption into a stable home is the long-term solution that allows children to outgrow those circumstances and become

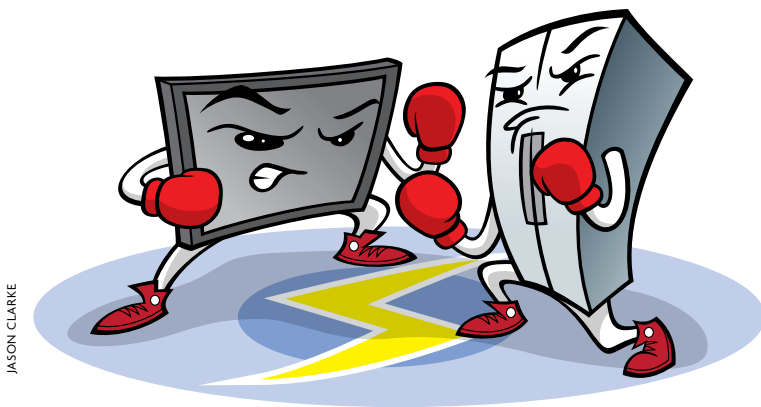


For more information on foster care and adoption, contact Children Come First at scchildrencomefirst.org. To read the feature, visit SCLiving.coop.

the people they were born to be.

A child in foster care has as much potential as any other child to be the next great doctor, artist, athlete, musician, scientist, business executive or explorer—if he or she can find a safe and stable home.

—NAOMI TORFIN



ENERGY QUIZ

The Big Screen vs. The Refrigerator

Q Which appliance draws more electricity—your refrigerator or your brand-new, big-screen, high-definition TV?

A It might be a tie. Today's televisions offer larger, thinner screens and incredible picture quality, however some models also require a surprising amount of energy to operate. As a rule of thumb, the bigger the screen, the more power required.

Plasma screens use the most electricity. Their large 42- to 65-inch displays typically draw between 240 watts to 400 watts (almost as much as a refrigerator) and most consume electricity even when turned off. LCD screens, which range in size from 21 inches to 49 inches, draw about 111 watts on average. LCD TVs fall into two categories: those with cold-cathode fluorescent lamps to illuminate the screen; and backlit models employing light-emitting diodes (LED). LED units use slightly less energy, about 101 watts.

—BRIAN SLOBODA



ENERGY EFFICIENCY *Tip of the Month*

Use the moisture sensor feature on your clothes dryer if it has one. This option shuts down the dryer when clothes are dry. In addition, clean the lint filter after each load. This improves air circulation and increases the dryer's efficiency. SOURCE: U.S. DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY

S.C. RAMBLE!

BY CHARLES JOYNER,
SEE ANSWER ON PAGE 34

THE VALUE OF CO-OPS

Each of the 10 different letters in ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE has been given a different value from zero through nine in this puzzle. Given the total value of the letters in each word below, can you find the value of each letter, and the total value of ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE?

VALOR (34) RIVER (32) PARTICLE (32) VAPOR (31) RIVET (26)
CLEAR (23) PALACE (23) TIRE (19) PAVE (18) TRIP (18)

E L E C T R I C C O O P E R A T I V E

+ + + + + + + + + + + + + + + + =



READER CONNECTIONS

Favorite physician

Thanks to all our readers who sent in their stories of first-rate health-care professionals. Of the many essays we received, this one stood out.

Straight from the heart

My favorite health-care professional is Dr. Dale Gordineer of Doctors Care in Aiken. In August 2008, I took my son to Doctors Care because we believed he had bronchitis. Dr. Gordineer examined him and confirmed the case of bronchitis, but he also discovered something far more serious. My son, age 12, had a heart murmur. The news came as a shock, and I was quite overwhelmed. After the examination, he referred us to a cardiologist for further testing.

Over the next few days, it was confirmed that my son had a congenital heart defect that would require open heart surgery to repair. The surgery was performed on April 2, 2009, and my son is now as good as new. Throughout this ordeal, Dr. Gordineer went above and beyond for our family, listening to all of my cares and concerns and taking great care of my son. I feel very blessed and so very thankful to have him as our physician.

KAREN MCDUFF, GRANITEVILLE

Write SCL

Letters to the editor

We love hearing from our readers. Tell us what you think about this issue, send us story suggestions or just let us know what's on your mind by writing to Letters, South Carolina Living, 808 Knox Abbott Drive, Cayce, SC 29033. You can also e-mail us at letters@scliving.coop or send a note by fax to (803) 796-6064. All letters received are subject to editing before publication.

LETTERS

EGG-FREE ICE CREAM

I always enjoy *South Carolina Living* magazine with its many interesting articles on co-op activity and energy conservation along with features on special people and places around our great state. However, in the August 2010 issue the recipe for "Dr. White's Famous Peach Ice Cream" raised a concern. While the ice cream recipe sounds delicious, I couldn't help but notice that it includes four raw eggs. While eggs were a common ingredient in ice cream recipes for many years, and in fact, I grew up eating ice cream made from a similar recipe with no apparent harm, the consumption of raw eggs is no longer considered a safe practice due to possible contamination from salmonella bacteria. Our family discontinued the use of raw eggs in our ice cream recipe some 25 years ago, and we really can't tell the difference. No complaints—just calls for seconds!

MELVIN WARE, BLACKSBURG

LOVE THE BUGS

My husband and I wanted to let you know how much we thoroughly enjoyed "Close encounters of the bug kind" (SC Humor Me, page 38) in the August issue of *South Carolina Living*. The entire article is extremely well written and absolutely hilarious!

ROBIN & ROY PRICE,
GAFFNEY



JAN IGOE

GONE FISHIN'

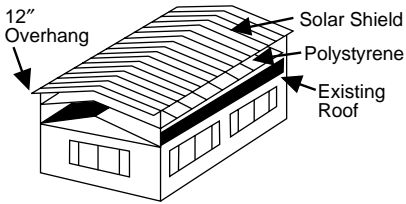
The Vector Fish & Game Forecast provides feeding and migration times. Major periods can bracket the peak by an hour. Minor peaks, ½ hour before and after.

| | AM | | PM | |
|-----------------|-------|-------|-------|-------|
| | Minor | Major | Minor | Major |
| OCTOBER | | | | |
| 17 | 3:22 | 9:37 | 10:37 | 4:22 |
| 18 | 4:22 | 10:22 | 4:37 | 10:52 |
| 19 | 5:07 | 10:52 | 4:52 | 11:22 |
| 20 | 11:22 | 5:37 | 5:07 | 11:37 |
| 21 | 11:52 | 6:22 | 5:22 | 12:07 |
| 22 | — | 6:52 | 12:22 | 12:37 |
| 23 | — | 7:37 | 12:52 | 6:07 |
| 24 | 8:22 | 1:07 | 1:22 | 6:22 |
| 25 | 9:07 | 1:52 | 1:37 | 6:52 |
| 26 | 10:07 | 2:22 | 2:22 | 7:07 |
| 27 | 11:07 | 3:07 | 3:07 | 7:37 |
| 28 | — | 4:07 | 8:07 | 12:37 |
| 29 | — | 5:07 | 9:37 | 1:52 |
| 30 | — | 6:37 | 8:52 | 2:37 |
| 31 | 1:07 | 7:52 | 9:37 | 3:07 |
| NOVEMBER | | | | |
| 1 | 2:16 | 8:16 | 2:46 | 9:16 |
| 2 | 3:31 | 9:01 | 3:16 | 10:01 |
| 3 | 10:01 | 4:31 | 3:31 | 10:31 |
| 4 | 10:46 | 5:16 | 4:01 | 11:01 |
| 5 | 11:16 | 6:16 | 4:31 | 11:46 |
| 6 | — | 7:01 | 12:01 | 5:01 |
| 7 | 7:46 | 12:16 | 12:31 | 5:31 |
| 8 | 8:31 | 1:01 | 1:16 | 6:01 |
| 9 | 9:31 | 1:46 | 2:01 | 6:31 |
| 10 | 10:31 | 2:16 | 3:01 | 7:01 |
| 11 | 11:46 | 3:16 | 4:46 | 7:31 |
| 12 | — | 4:01 | 8:31 | 12:31 |
| 13 | — | 5:16 | 8:01 | 1:16 |
| 14 | 12:01 | 6:31 | 8:31 | 1:46 |
| 15 | 2:16 | 7:31 | 2:16 | 9:01 |
| 16 | 3:31 | 8:31 | 2:31 | 9:31 |

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| SAMPLE LOAN | PAYMENT* | TERM* | RATE* | APR* |
|-------------|------------|--------------|-------|-------|
| \$75,000 | \$380.01 | 30 YR. Fixed | 4.50% | 4.71% |
| \$125,000 | \$624.11 | 30 YR. Fixed | 4.37% | 4.56% |
| \$200,000 | \$998.57 | 30 YR. Fixed | 4.37% | 4.53% |
| \$75,000 | \$557.77 | 15 YR. Fixed | 4.00% | 4.51% |
| \$125,000 | \$924.61 | 15 YR. Fixed | 4.00% | 4.51% |
| \$200,000 | \$1,468.88 | 15 YR. Fixed | 3.87% | 4.19% |

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MIKE COUICK
President and
CEO, The Electric
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South Carolina

BIPARTISANSHIP IS RARE IN WASHINGTON, D.C. these days, a condition aggravated by a sluggish economy and the upcoming elections. But a good idea, one with the power to improve lives, can still unite our elected officials.

I was in the gallery of the U.S. House of Representatives on Sept. 16 and watched with pride as the congressmen—led by the members of the South Carolina delegation—passed the Rural Energy Savings Program Act (see “The Power of Efficiency,” page 16). Commonly referred to as Rural Star, the bill would make federal loan funds available to members of electric cooperatives nationwide. The loans, administered by participating co-ops, would be used to make homes more energy efficient, and members would pay them back through the savings on their monthly power bills.

Rural Star came to the floor as part of a larger bill that included an unrelated—and controversial—urban energy program. In a preliminary vote, the representatives considered each section of the bill separately and when they voted on the specific provisions of Rural Star, it earned overwhelming and bipartisan support.

Rural Star bucked the partisan trend because it was a commonsense solution that was widely embraced by the members the South Carolina delegation. Rep. James Clyburn, the House Majority Whip, sponsored the Rural Star bill. Fellow Democrat Rep. John Spratt, as well as Republican Reps. Henry Brown, Bob Inglis, and Joe Wilson, all co-sponsored it. The Senate version of the bill was co-sponsored by Republican Lindsey Graham, a respected leader on energy issues, who has spoken in favor of the plan.

It also helped that our representatives challenged their colleagues to see the value of a program that 1) was a loan program, not a giveaway; 2) would save all cooperative

consumers money (not just those living in retrofitted homes); 3) protected our environment by reducing carbon dioxide emissions; and 4) had the potential to create jobs and boost local economies.

Or maybe the Rural Star loan program gained bipartisan support because it embodies the same values as our cooperatives—working together to solve problems and looking out for our neighbors as well as ourselves. It’s that spirit that built the original lines in the 1940s and earned co-op members a reputation for reliability. “They are some of the most trustworthy people in America,” Sen. Graham said. “They will pay you back.”

Today, co-ops serve 1.5 million South Carolinians in all 46 counties, and the challenge is keeping the costs of electricity under control in the face of changing environmental standards and rising fuel prices. If we all pitch in, we can maintain affordable rates. Let your U.S. Senators, Lindsey Graham and Jim DeMint, know that you are willing to roll up your sleeves and work so that not only *your* wallet is protected, but also those of your neighbors.

Sen. Graham may be reached by completing an e-mail web-form at

lgraham.senate.gov/public.

Sen. DeMint may be reached by completing an e-mail web-form at

demint.senate.gov/public.

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Cooking with steam

Q I want a healthy and efficient method to cook meals for my family, and I don't like microwave ovens for most food. How efficient are residential steam ovens? Do they bake and roast as well as a regular oven?

A Steam ovens are used by professional bakeries and restaurants because they bring out the natural flavor of cooked foods, and they dramatically reduce cooking time. Steam ovens sold for home use have the same advantages, and while they cost more than comparable standard or convection ovens, they can be an energy-efficient option because shorter cooking times mean you'll be using less electricity when you prepare meals.

Food cooks much faster in a steam oven because steam has a higher heat content and heat transfer rate than hot air. Some steam ovens can produce superheated steam as hot as 500 degrees. When this steam hits the food surface, it transfers its heat to the cold food. As the steam condenses, the latent heat also goes into the food.

Superheated steam heats the fat in meat quickly without searing the outside surface. This liquefies fat almost instantly—much of it drips off into a pan—but the steam keeps the meat moist, resulting in a tasty, lower-fat meal. For breads, the moisture



Built-in steam ovens for home use are about the same size as conventional wall ovens.

inside the steam oven makes much better crusts and provides more even baking. The one thing a steam oven can't do is brown meat. For that you'll need a combination steam/convection oven.

There are additional energy savings because an entire meal (meat, vegetables and potatoes) can be made in a steam oven without using the stovetop. Most new steam ovens have computerized controls to help you determine the proper cooking time and settings for different foods and even combinations of foods. If you are planning to have fish, spinach and

potatoes for dinner, the oven prompts you to place the potatoes in the oven first since they take the longest to bake. After 18 minutes, it prompts you to add the fish. It then prompts you to add the spinach for the final three minutes.

Steam ovens are available as built-in units, which look similar to a conventional wall oven, and as free-standing units, which are about the size of a microwave oven. Most plug into a standard 120-volt wall outlet and have a small water reservoir (typically 1.25 quarts) that you'll need to fill each time you use the oven. One final word of advice if you're buying a steam oven: Don't be tempted to buy a professional unit as they may lack certain safety features. Get an oven designed for home use and make sure it's approved by Underwriters Laboratories (UL). ☺

Send questions to Energy Q&A, South Carolina Living, 808 Knox Abbott Drive, Cayce SC 29033, e-mail energyQA@scliving.coop or fax (803) 739-3041.

LearnMore

The following companies offer efficient steam wall ovens:

| | | |
|------------|----------------|--|
| Gaggenau | (877) 442-4436 | gaggenau.com |
| Kitchenaid | (800) 334-6889 | kitchenaid.com |
| Miele | (800) 843-7231 | mieleusa.com |
| Sharp | (800) 237-4277 | sharpusa.com |
| Viking | (888) 845-4641 | vikingrange.com |

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ZMS/EOX

Cutting-edge home theater gear

THE RAPID PACE OF TECHNOLOGY is a double-edged sword when you're shopping for home theater gear. Products get better and cheaper all the time, but the standards for state-of-the-art performance and "gotta have it" features are always changing, too.

One trend is clear, says John Sciacca, a partner at Custom Theater and Audio in Murrells Inlet: web-enabled devices are here to stay. "As consumers continue to get more of their entertainment from Internet-based sources, more and more products will incorporate this functionality, enabling consumers to easily access and enjoy it from their living rooms instead of being tethered to a computer."

FULL STREAM AHEAD

Samsung's 1000W 3-D HT-C6930 Blu-ray Home Theater System uses "feedback" circuit technology to filter out noise distortion and provide richer sound. Streaming online videos, such as those delivered by Netflix and Blockbuster subscriptions, are seamlessly integrated via a high-definition multimedia interface (HDMI) cable and wireless router so you can instantly select and watch movies. HDMI also allows you to download apps and widgets so you can access Facebook, Twitter and YouTube with your television remote control.

Bonus: The latest models use 30 percent less power than they did just one year ago. Now that's progress! \$800. (888) 205-1987; onecall.com.



3-D TV

PERFORMANCE PLASMA

Reality television has new meaning in the HD 3-D world of the Panasonic VIERA VT25 Series plasma television. The 65-inch model is videophone-ready and has three speakers. It's equipped with top-of-the-line resolution and contrast technology with 6,144 lines of shade gradation versus the old standard of 4,096. That gives this model a phenomenally clear picture even in 2-D. Includes 3-D glasses. \$4,300. (877) 744-1179; listenup.com.

WATCH OUT

You can't help but react to the action leaping off the screen of the BRAVIA LX900 Series LCD television with built-in 3-D. It features wi-fi connectivity, an HD 1080p screen for image clarity and Motionflow PRO—a 240 hertz refresh rate that makes fast action scenes scream with power. Comes with 3-D glasses. \$4,000. (877) 865-7669; sonystyle.com.



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Tiny spaces can have luxurious home theaters, too. Sink into Italian leather and enjoy the sonic experience of seven high-performance speakers built into the BodySound Home Theater. Each recliner includes a Dolby digitally controlled audio system, automatic volume adjustments and a touch-screen remote. The steel-framed and acoustically optimized chair also has sonic massage function and two massage generators. Starts at \$7,945. (877) 943-4041; bodysoundtheater.com.

BEDROOM FUN

Get comfortable while you read, listen to music, play computer games or watch your favorite videos with the iCon bed from Hollandia International and Therapedic. It comes standard with Apple iPad docking stations, four fully enclosed speakers, a 250-watt amplifier, dual-core 3-D mattress and an adjustable, motorized foundation. Bonus: It's available in more than 200 colors and fabrics. Starts at \$20,000. (215) 923-2616; hollandiainternational.com.



A greener way to mow your lawn

GAS-POWERED LAWN MOWERS can be found on almost every street in America. Sadly, these small engines emit a surprisingly large amount of pollution, including carbon monoxide, a colorless and odorless gas that is toxic to humans, as well as hydrocarbons and nitrogen oxide that contribute to the formation of ground-level ozone. In fact, operating a gasoline-powered lawn mower for one hour produces the same amount of smog-forming pollution as driving an average car almost 200 miles, according to the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA).

What's more, gas lawn mowers are noisy—just ask anyone who wanted to sleep in on a Saturday morning when a neighbor decided to get an early start on yard work. Luckily for your lungs, your lawn and your neighbors, there are alternatives.

One option is an electric lawn-mower. They are quiet, emit no direct pollutants and come in both corded and battery-operated models. Costs for a corded electric mower are similar to those of a comparable gas-powered mower, ranging from \$150 to more than \$400. Their biggest drawback: they must be connected to the house via an extension cord. As you can imagine, users must be aware of where the cord is at all times in order to avoid running over it with the mower.

Cordless rechargeable mowers are more convenient than their corded counterparts. Some cordless mowers have a removable battery that can be charged inside the home and placed in the mower when it is time to cut grass. Costs range from \$200 to more than \$500.

Rechargeable mowers are limited by the life of the battery pack. As a result, they are not the best choice



Many cordless mowers claim to give users 45 to 60 minutes of cutting time per charge, or roughly enough time to cut one-third to one-half of an acre.

for large lawns. When shopping for a cordless mower, look for information on the size of lawn the mower can handle or the time provided by a single charge. Many cordless mowers claim to give users 45 to 60 minutes of cutting time per charge, or roughly

enough time to cut one-third to one-half of an acre. Actual cutting time will vary depending on the age of the battery and the height of the grass.

Another option is to use a manual push mower. Modern reel mowers start at \$70. They are surprisingly light and maneuverable compared to the older models you might remember, though it's still hard to push any human-powered mower through tall grass. They are a good choice for smaller yards and work best when the cutting blades are regularly sharpened and the wheels frequently lubricated. ☺

BRIAN SLOBODA is a program manager specializing in energy efficiency for the Cooperative Research Network, a service of the Arlington, Va.-based National Rural Electric Cooperative Association.

Efficient THE POWER

To understand the power of conserving electricity, consider the bill Linda Butler received in early September from her electric co-op: Total due, about \$125. That's a reasonable amount for

comfortably cooling a 1,296-square-foot home through the "dog days" of August in South Carolina, especially when you consider that Butler, a member of Tri-County Electric Cooperative, shares her home with her daughter and granddaughter. But just a few months ago, her peak-season heating and cooling bills were \$400 to \$500 a month, with one bill almost

how everyday fixes could reap significant savings. Under the supervision of her co-op, contractors plugged leaks, added insulation and installed a new, high-efficiency heat pump. "I didn't know that a house could have so many holes in it," Butler said.

In the 10 months since the work was completed on her home, Butler has cut her energy use by 20,309 kilowatt-hours and her monthly bills by an average of \$188. To date, all seven Help My House winners have saved a total of 33,016 kilowatt-hours and \$4,296.29.

Now consider that hundreds of thousands of homes served by co-ops in South Carolina need those same basic upgrades, and imagine the savings if the homeowners could find a way to pay the upfront costs of improvements.



Linda Butler is a true believer in the power of energy efficiency. She's been smiling ever since a home makeover shaved hundreds of dollars off her monthly electric bill.

\$800. To make matters worse, she and her family were still sweating through summers and shivering through winters.

Like many homes in South Carolina, Butler's was poorly insulated and riddled with air leaks that made an outdated heating and cooling system work overtime. Her salary as a part-time teacher's aide made paying utility bills a struggle, and left nothing to pay the thousands of dollars it would cost to make her home energy efficient. In desperation, she entered the Help My House home makeover contest offered by the state's electric co-ops. From 4,000 entries, Butler's home was one of seven selected for free efficiency upgrades as a demonstration project to show



OF nancy

South Carolina co-ops roll out a plan to generate new jobs, a cleaner environment and big savings.

BY KEITH PHILLIPS

Rural Star

The Rural Energy Savings Program Act, nicknamed Rural Star, would do just that. Approved by the U.S. House of Representatives on Sept. 16, the bill would allow co-op members to finance qualified efficiency upgrades through low-interest loans repaid by monthly energy savings. If it passes the Senate and becomes law, Rural Star would provide \$4.9 billion in federal loan funds to electric co-ops nationwide. The co-ops, in turn, would loan the funds to their members at very low interest rates with the funds paid back over a period of 5 to 10 years.

South Carolina's electric co-ops developed the concept and have a plan to loan approximately \$750 million to co-op members with a goal of upgrading 225,000 homes over 10 years. That plan calls for participating co-ops to use a repayment formula where two-thirds of the savings on each monthly bill would be applied to the loan, with the co-op member keeping the remaining third. To qualify, homes would undergo an

energy audit to ensure that the loan can be paid back in a reasonable time, said Mike Couick, CEO of The Electric Cooperatives of South Carolina.

A homegrown idea

The idea for the Rural Star program began with a June 2009 conversation between Couick and Congressman John Spratt, the representative of South Carolina's

Bipartisan support for the Rural Star concept was evident from the start when Republican Senator Lindsey Graham joined Democrats including U.S. Reps James Clyburn (center) and John Spratt (right) in promoting the loan program.



Rural Star by the numbers

225,000

The number of cooperative-served HOMES targeted for efficiency upgrades in South Carolina's Rural Star plan.

\$750 million

The projected amount of federal loan funds needed to UPGRADE those homes.

6.7 million metric tons

The estimated REDUCTION in carbon dioxide emissions over 10 years if the goal is met.

\$280 million

The projected ANNUAL SAVINGS to co-op members living in the upgraded homes when the program is fully implemented.

\$4 billion

The estimated savings for ALL South Carolina co-op members by avoiding or delaying the construction of new nuclear power facilities.

3,500

The number of JOBS that could be created in South Carolina during the first three years of the program.

John Spratt accepts co-ops' service award

Shortly before Congress reconvened in September, 5th District Congressman John Spratt met with leaders of South Carolina's electric cooperatives to receive the Lineman Award for his long career in public service. But the meeting quickly turned into an open discussion on the pending Rural Energy Savings Program Act. Mike Couick, CEO of The Electric Cooperatives of South Carolina, told those in attendance that the program had been inspired by a conversation with Spratt (see main story), but the congressman was quick to give credit to the cooperatives themselves, calling Rural Star "a good example of why the co-ops are so important."

"You found an area that's not being stressed nearly enough and that is conservation and efficiency," Spratt said. "That's got to be part of the plan for any kind of profitable, well-returning reformation of our energy markets. To your great credit you seized upon the idea ... and came up with a very neat proposal."

ECSC CEO Mike Couick (left) awards the Lineman Trophy to Rep. John Spratt in recognition of his support for South Carolina co-ops.



"I sat down with Congressman Spratt lamenting that everything Congress had looked at was going to be a lot more expensive for co-op members," Couick said. "He said, 'We've got to do something to help these folks. Bring us back some ideas.'"

Couick then met with Ron Calcaterra, CEO of Central Electric Power Cooperative. As the provider of electricity for all 20 of South Carolina's distribution co-ops, Central concluded that the cost-effective way to reduce carbon dioxide emissions and keep electricity affordable was to lower system-wide energy use and reduce peak demand. When Central's engineers studied the options, they calculated that improving the efficiency of 225,000 homes could reduce energy use by 5.6 million megawatt-hours over the next 10 years, cutting the state's carbon dioxide emissions by 6.7 million metric tons in the process.

The sticking point: Finding a practical way for co-op members, many with low incomes, to pay the up-front costs of energy-efficiency upgrades. Co-ops in Kansas had experimented with micro-lending programs and on-bill financing, but the plan developed by South Carolina's co-ops expanded the concept to whole-house efficiency on an unprecedented scale.

When Couick brought the proposal to Washington, he shared it with Spratt and House Majority Whip James Clyburn, who represents South Carolina's 6th District. "I fell in love with the idea and then introduced the concept to the members of Congress on both sides of the aisle," Clyburn said. "Everybody felt this was a great thing to undertake."

"This bill has the potential of lowering the cost of heating and cooling homes throughout South Carolina, it has the real potential for providing a shot in the arm for the economies of rural communities and it has great potential to lower carbon emissions."

REP. JOHN **SPRATT** (D), 5TH DISTRICT

5th District and one of the most senior members in the House. Couick was watching the climate change debate in Washington with concern. The vast majority of South Carolina's electricity is produced by coal-burning power plants and the federal government was considering taxes on the carbon dioxide they produce, along with mandates to force utilities to use costly alternative energy sources. No matter how well-intentioned, those ideas would have one certain result: South Carolinians would face higher power bills.

"If this bill becomes law ... customers get a convenient way to pay over time for power-saving home improvements, and they save on their power bills. The co-ops get to hold off on buying in to new generating capacity. The country gets a start on conservation—the quickest way to energy freedom."

REP. BOB **INGLIS** (R), 4TH DISTRICT



ANNE MCQUARY

improve quality of life

“This is a loan program, not a grant or a rebate, and the loans are paid back to the federal treasury. This bill provides for energy conservation, job creation and cost-effective upgrades that will improve consumers’ quality of life. It is a win-win-win proposition.”

House Majority Whip James Clyburn sponsored the Rural Star bill which passed in September. The legislation is pending in the Senate.

REP. JAMES E. **CLYBURN** (D), HOUSE MAJORITY WHIP, 6TH DISTRICT

Sponsored by Clyburn, the Rural Energy Savings Program Act gained bipartisan support with 55 co-sponsors, including Spratt and Republican Reps. Bob Inglis, Joe Wilson and Henry Brown. When the bill was introduced in

create jobs

“The money that we’ll make available to be loaned by the co-ops will go to some of the most trustworthy people in America. They will pay you back. The cost of this bill over a 10-year period is negligible to the taxpayer, and the benefit of job creation is enormous. It is smart policy to take a small, limited amount of federal dollars and empower people to help themselves.”

SEN. LINDSEY **GRAHAM** (R)

March, Republican Senator Lindsey Graham, an early co-sponsor of a companion bill in the Senate, joined Democrats Clyburn and Spratt at a press conference to promote the Rural Star concept. “This is a plan that will help consumers become more energy efficient and lower their electricity costs,” Graham said.

The House bill authorizing the loan program sailed through the Agriculture Committee and quickly made it to the floor for a final vote, where it passed 240-172. The bill is pending in the Senate. If passed and signed into law, Congress will still need to approve funding for the program in the appropriations process before loans can begin.

Dollars and sense

While the Rural Star program began with the goal of reducing greenhouse gas emissions, the economic benefits for South Carolina are a “grand slam,” Spratt said. “The real impact of this is that it will work, and it has multiple winners.”

If the program sufficiently lowers energy use, all co-op members will avoid paying the estimated \$4 billion cost of building new nuclear power facilities—nuclear being the only practical power source that would also lower carbon dioxide emissions. The program is expected to create 3,500 private sector jobs throughout the state in the first three years, as workers would be needed to perform energy audits and upgrades. And as Clyburn points out: “These are jobs that cannot be exported.”

The investment in efficiency upgrades would also spur sales of American-made equipment and supplies, but the greatest benefit to local economies would be the on-going savings for co-op members. If the program reaches its goal of upgrading 225,000 homes, the combined savings to those members are estimated at \$280 million a year, Couick said. That would be especially helpful for low-income earners who in peak seasons may spend 60 to 80 percent of their disposable income on energy. Less money spent on utility bills means more money for other necessities.

That was certainly the case for Linda Butler, who joined Clyburn at a September press conference to tell her story and urge passage of the bill. “I hope they will get it passed because there are a lot of people out there who need it,” she said. ☺



Rep. Bob Inglis (above), of South Carolina’s 4th District, and Rep. Joe Wilson (below), of the 2nd District, were among the Republican co-sponsors of the Rural Energy Savings Program Act.



Local 4-H'ers make a difference

Planting energy efficiency to light the way



News EXTRA



Youth ages 8-16 enjoyed the 4-H Electric Workshop offered by Marlboro County Clemson Extension this summer.

PLAIN CLAY POTS were transformed into beautifully decorated lamps by local 4-H participants this summer, topped off with energy-efficient light bulbs donated by Marlboro Electric to make even more of a difference.

Marlboro County Clemson Extension offered a variety of 4-H summer workshops for youth ages 8-16. The hands-on activities introduced the youth to 4-H, provided activities to help them develop their own personal development skills, gave them a positive experience and, most importantly, they had fun.

The world of electricity was explored in the Electric Workshop and participants learned basic electrical concepts and safety techniques. Clay pots were painted and decorated with decals and artwork ranging from hearts and flowers to sports. Then, the lamps were properly assembled and wired. Compact fluorescent light

(CFL) bulbs were used to teach the importance of energy efficiency and safety to the 4-H group.

Staff and adult volunteers work together to offer 4-H educational programs to empower youth to become healthy, productive and contributing members of society and their community. A learn-by-doing approach of energetic activities may range from animals, natural resources, shooting sports, and foods and nutrition, to science and technology, photography, leadership and more.

South Carolina 4-H program is a community of young people across America who are learning leadership, citizenship and life skills offered through Clemson University Cooperative Extension Service since 1908. ☺

To learn more about South Carolina 4-H programs, visit Clemson.edu/4h. For local information, call Marlboro County 4-H office, (843) 479-6851, or Dillon County 4-H, (843) 774-8218.

Makayla Karn, 9, puts a compact fluorescent light bulb in her new clay pot lamp she created. Makayla is the daughter of Marlboro Electric Co-op members Marvin and Carolyn Karn of Clio.



CHRISTY OVERSTREET



Michael McManus, 4-H agent, worked with participants on learning basic electrical concepts and safety techniques when making clay pot lamps.



An awards banquet was held on August 31 at Bennettsville Community Center to recognize participating students, parents, grandparents, businesses, teachers and supporters of the local 4-H programs. Carolyn Crouse and Gloria Quick were recognized as retiring from Marlboro County's Clemson Extension Service with more than 20 years of service.



Co-op members Johnny and Gwen Newton, founders and leaders of MYOSA (Marlboro Youth Outdoor Shooting Association), were recognized for their dedication to the 4-H Shooting Sports.

October is Domestic Violence Awareness Month

BY CHRISTY OVERSTREET

DOMESTIC VIOLENCE TOUCHES the lives of Americans of all ages, leaving a devastating impact on women, men, and children of every background and circumstance. A family's home becomes a place of fear, hopelessness and desperation when a woman is battered by her partner, a child witnesses the abuse of a loved one or a senior is victimized by family members.

Pee Dee Coalition Against Domestic and Sexual Assault is a non-profit organization dedicated to the reduction of rape, family violence and child abuse and to the needs of its victims.

"It's important that people be aware of the many different programs we offer, such as the Children's Durant Center," Director of Development Marie Long said. "Programs and services include community victim assistance, emergency safe shelters, Durant Children's Center, Prevent Child Abuse Pee Dee, alternatives to violence, reducing our assault risk, and training and education. Counseling, temporary accommodations, medical, legal and criminal justice advocacy and accompaniment are all available."

During National Domestic Violence Awareness Month, Pee Dee Coalition asks everyone to recommit, speak out about this serious issue and raise awareness to end violence within homes,

our communities and our country. It is also a time to mourn those who have died due to domestic violence, celebrate with those who have survived and connect with those who work to end violence against women and children.

Marlboro County's coordinator Loretta Love is planning a "Candlelight Vigil" at the Bennettsville Community Center, October 21, 6:30-8:30 p.m. for the public to attend.

To help states, municipalities, agencies and individuals with the goals of the Violence Against Women Act, the U.S. Department of Justice's Office of Violence Against Women has worked with Congress and the president and local, state and national civil society agencies to establish months designated to raise awareness about the four crimes included in the bill: January is Stalking Awareness Month; February is Dating Violence Awareness and Prevention Month; April is Sexual Assault Awareness Month; and October is Domestic Violence Awareness Month.

"We have been targeting adolescents this year with date rape facts, the importance of early reporting, encouraging victims to allow law enforcement to investigate and victim's rights," Dillon County's local coordinator Gwen Dotson said. "In addition, a 'Lunch & Learn' for military wives and female veterans is scheduled for October 19 at United Methodist, Main Street



CHRISTY OVERSTREET

Marlboro Electric's employee Jean Evers, right, assists Pee Dee Coalition's Marie Long, left, and Loretta Love with phones donated by Marlboro Electric for victims to call 911 in emergency situations.

in Dillon."

Pee Dee Coalition is funded through local, state and federal dollars while relying heavily on both financial and in-kind contributions from the general public. Through Marlboro Electric's Operation Round Up program, the Trust Board has been able to help individuals in desperate need through Pee Dee Coalition.

During the upcoming holidays, the emergency safe shelters are used more. The organization appreciates donations such as household items, cleaning supplies, food, personal hygiene and

medical items. Donations to the organization may be received at any of the Satellite Centers.

Together, we all can make a difference in the lives of victims and their families. ☺

To learn more about the Pee Dee Coalition, visit PeeDeeCoalition.org or call (843) 669-4694. For Marlboro County's Satellite Center, located at 108 Parsonage Street, Bennettsville, call (843) 479-0882. For Dillon County's Satellite Center, located at 203 North Fifth Avenue, Dillon, call (843) 774-0898.

24-HOUR CRISIS LINES: (843) 669-4600 or (800) 273-1820

CHILD HELP PEE DEE 24-HOUR HELP LINE: (866) 867-9857

Staying alive

Co-op employees learn safe work habits



CHRISTY OVERSTREET

Safety Director John Powers observes Jimmie Ridges during his CPR training.

MARLBORO ELECTRIC EMPLOYEES place safety as their top priority for themselves and others, especially during dangerous times. Each month, co-op employees participate in training sessions involving safety practices and take the time to inspect equipment and safety gear.

Lineworkers take precautions to make any necessary repairs safely. For example, when working on a line, they are required to wear rubber insulated gloves and sleeves. These rubber insulated gloves and sleeves are made of 'special' materials to work on power lines so employees will not be injured. Hard hats, goggles, first-aid kits, fire extinguishers and other items are used by lineworkers.

It is also important that co-op employees learn safety procedures. Marlboro Electric employees receive defensive driving training, pole-top rescue, first aid, CPR and many other safety classes.

The construction, operation and maintenance of our distribution system promote safety for electric cooperative employees and our member consumers. The safety practices of Marlboro Electric reflect the requirements and/or

recommended practices of the National Electrical Safety Code, the Rural Utilities Service, the Institute of Electrical and Electronics Engineers, Inc. and the American National Standards Institute, and the Occupational, Safety and Health Administration.

The co-op is proud of their outstanding safety record and strives to keep danger in the distance as much as possible by educating and training employees so they can go



Lineworkers Roddy Bowers, left, Steve Ellerbe, top right, and Jimmie Ridges check their rubber insulated gloves and sleeves for any defects.

home to their families just as our members do. Protect the well-being and safety of your family and safeguard those who come to your aid, like co-op lineworkers.

When we work together for safety and the good for our communities, we all benefit. Marlboro Electric wants to keep lights on for members and for employees. ☺



Employees Robbie Kirk, left, and Earl Watson received their Supervisory Certificates from President and CEO Bill Fleming after completing coursework through the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association.



Marlboro Electric employees John Powers, left, and Terry Terry package old meters to be recycled and shipped to a third world country. Packages were then loaded into a truck provided by NRECA International Foundation as shown by co-op employee James Emanuel in the photo below.

Co-op donates old meters

BEGINNING IN JANUARY 2010, Marlboro Electric has been changing out meters and replacing them with new digital meters capable of the latest advanced metering infrastructure functions to better serve members.

What happens to the old meters? Marlboro Electric has donated the old meters to the NRECA International Foundation to be recycled and sent to Guatemala, a third-world country.

“We wanted to do something smarter with the used units, like recycling, rather than disposing of them at a landfill,” Manager of Information Systems/Public Relations John Powers said. “Not only is this a green way, it is the co-op way by helping those living without power, in

a third-world country, receive electricity.”

The NRECA International Foundation partners with U.S. electric cooperatives and others to electrify rural villages and foster economic development, improving the lives of people in developing countries. The foundation was created in 1985 and has provided millions of dollars in funding, donated equipment, and volunteer personnel to electrify villages and share lessons from the U.S. electric cooperative experience with electric cooperatives in developing countries. ☺



CHRISTY OVERSTREET

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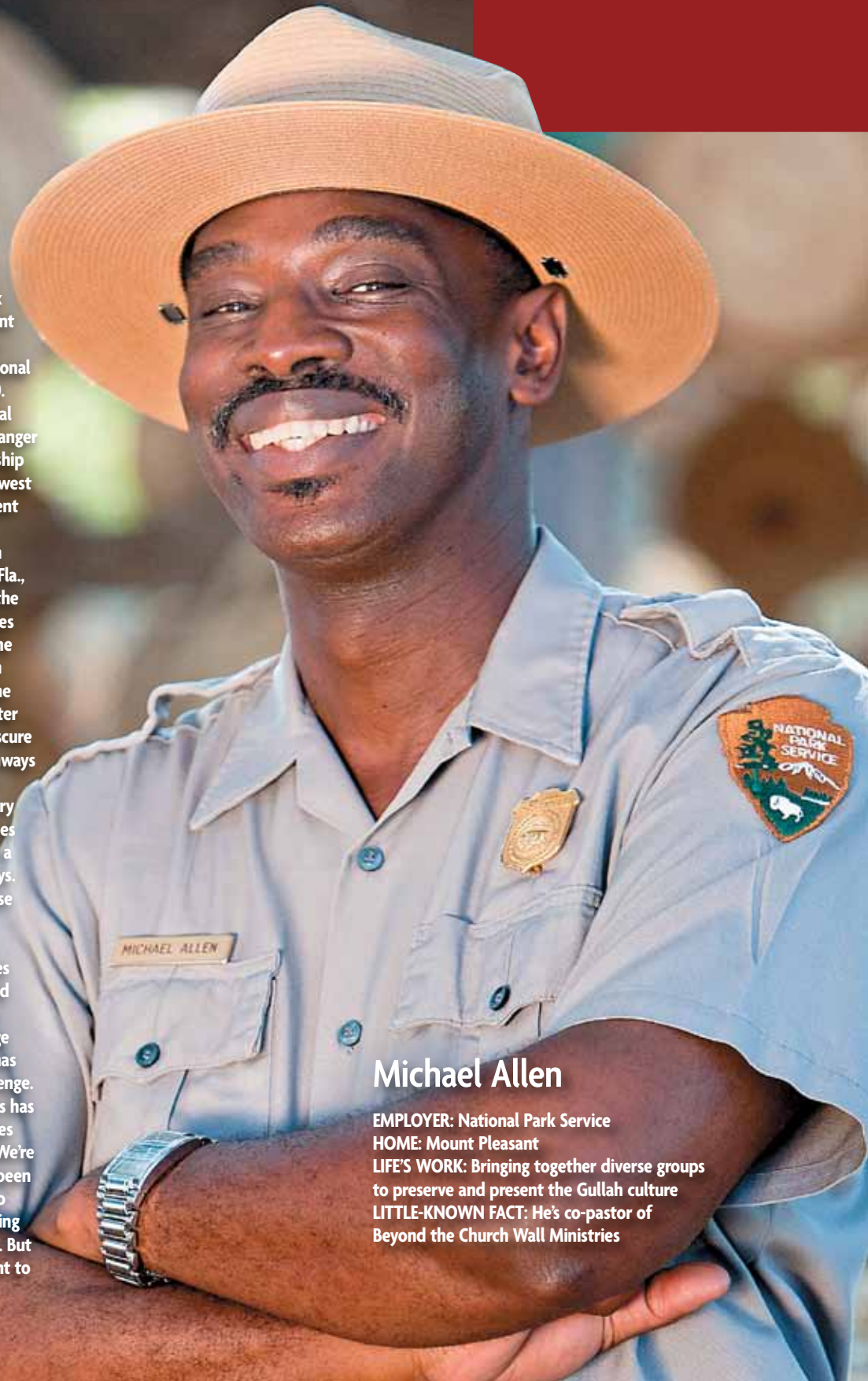
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He didn't know it then, but Michael Allen found his life's work when the history education student from South Carolina State College first reported to Fort Sumter National Monument in the summer of 1980.

Allen has been with the National Park Service ever since, first as a ranger and now as a community partnership specialist, the title given to his newest task: spearheading the development of the Gullah-Geechee Cultural Heritage Corridor. Stretching from Wilmington, N.C., to Jacksonville, Fla., the corridor is intended to share the culture and history of coastal slaves and their descendants. Some of the sites are well known, such as Penn Center on St. Helena Island and the new Sweetgrass Cultural Arts Center in Mount Pleasant. Others are obscure and some are simply cultural pathways that exist in hand-me-down songs and stories. "This is the only history corridor in the nation that stretches across four states and talks about a living, breathing culture," Allen says. "We're working to identify all these sites and to tie them together."

His decades of service at Fort Sumter, Liberty Square, the Charles Pinckney National Historic Site and the new museum at Fort Moultrie that focuses on the Middle Passage of enslaved Africans to America, has prepared Allen for his latest challenge.

"I feel like my work for 30 years has been to bring awareness into places where it has not been," he says. "We're engaging people who have never been engaged and involving people who have never been involved and telling stories that can be difficult to tell. But people are listening, and they want to work with us." —MARC RAPPORT



Michael Allen

EMPLOYER: National Park Service
HOME: Mount Pleasant
LIFE'S WORK: Bringing together diverse groups to preserve and present the Gullah culture
LITTLE-KNOWN FACT: He's co-pastor of Beyond the Church Wall Ministries

A first-timer's guide to South Carolina's fall equestrian events



MICHAEL DUKE

Off to the races

IN SOME CIRCLES, horse racing is viewed as strictly for the well-heeled, but tens of thousands of South Carolinians know that it doesn't have to cost an arm and four legs to be part of the fun at our state's fall equestrian events—the Aiken Fall Steeplechase (Oct. 30), the King's Tree Trials in Williamsburg County (Nov. 6) and the Colonial Cup in Camden (Nov. 13).

Even if you don't know a stirrup from a steak knife, watching highly trained, expertly ridden thoroughbreds compete for pride and cash prizes from total purses that reach \$100,000 can be an exciting way to spend a crisp fall day. "Unless you've been up close and seen top-notch horses like this thundering around the track, you've really been missing something," says Mia Miller, event coordinator for the Aiken Steeplechase Association. "It's thrilling and even a bit scary."

The Aiken and Camden races are major stops on the National Steeplechase Association circuit, which runs from spring through fall as horses and owners accumulate points for the prestigious Eclipse Awards. In fact, the Camden race is the final event of the season and often determines the winners in various categories, including steeplechase champion and overall horse of the year.

"Steeplechase racing has been around for hundreds of years, originating in the British Isles and named for the most obvious landmarks for the courses—church steeples. They'd race from one to the other," says Hope Cooper, director of the National Steeplechase Museum in Camden. In modern steeplechase racing, horse and rider jump fences, ditches and other obstacles on courses of various lengths, and the first one to the finish line, with rider aboard, is the winner.

The King's Tree Trial, on the other hand, is a traditional oval-track race. No obstacles, just four to six horses exploding from the starting gate and sprinting to the finish for their share of a total purse of about \$20,000.

All three events offer six to nine races a day, depending on the number of entries. Each race lasts only a few minutes, so in between, there is plenty of time to shop for souvenirs, tailgate and enjoy other festivities. There are usually special events for kids and the between-race rituals are, for many, as important as the races themselves.

While there are some high-priced options for seating and parking arrangements, for first-timers and the budget-conscious, general admission tickets (\$10 to \$30) are the way to go. They'll provide walk-in access to the infield and all the enjoyment provided by man and beast alike. Here's a closer look at each of the events.



When the real horses take a breather at the Aiken Fall Steeplechase, the stick ponies are raced by a younger group of jockeys.

AIKEN FALL STEEPLCHASE

Saturday, Oct. 30

LOCATION: Ford Conger Field

GATES OPEN: 9:30 a.m.

POST TIMES: First race 1 p.m.; sixth and final race, 3:30 p.m.

GENERAL ADMISSION: \$10 in advance, \$15 at the gate; children 6 and under get in free

FOR MORE INFORMATION on special parking and party packages for Friday night and Saturday events: (803) 648-9641, aikensteeplechase.com

For a lot of spectators, the Aiken Fall Steeplechase (also known this year as the Budweiser Holiday Cup) is as much about the party as the actual racing. The festivities begin Friday night with dinner and dancing at the Halloween-themed “Twilight in Transylvania” costume party at Ford Conger Field.

The actual races are held on Saturday. A \$10 advanced-purchase ticket (\$15 at the gate) gets you into the infield when the gates open at 9:30 a.m. Take a chair and a picnic lunch and enjoy yourself as you wait for the post time for the first race at 1 p.m. They’ll run six races over the course of the afternoon, the last one running at 3:30 p.m. Miller says the viewing is good anywhere within the infield fence, but the finish line is a particularly popular place to gather, because it’s close to the final action and the vendor village.

“Our tagline this year is ‘See Horses Fly’ and unless you’ve seen it in person, it’s really hard to describe or understand how impressive it really is,” Miller says.

The fall steeplechase is a family-friendly affair, and Saturday’s events include special activities for children including stick-pony races and a “paddock playground.” Tailgate competitions and other contests also add to the fun and the dress code is casual. However, this being Aiken, a carriage parade—with local couples dressed in finery that recalls the town’s heyday as a winter colony for the über-wealthy—is a highlight between the afternoon races.

KING’S TREE TRIALS

Saturday, Nov. 6

LOCATION: McCutchen Training Center, Kingstree

GATES OPEN: 9:30 a.m.

POST TIMES: Nine races beginning at noon; last race ends about 5 p.m.

GENERAL ADMISSION: \$15 per person

INFIELD PARKING: \$30-\$50

FOR MORE INFORMATION on tickets and parking: (843) 355-6431, williamsburgsc.org

Set in the serene farms, woods and wetlands of the Pee Dee, the King’s Tree Trials began 15 years ago as the brainchild of former Williamsburg County Supervisor Richard Treme and Bobby and Debby McCutchen, whose facility has long been a training site and winter home for championship horses. While the races attract top-notch horses and riders from around the region, it’s also a distinctly hometown, casual affair. Just ask Mona Dukes, development director at Williamsburg Technical College and five-year veteran of what locals simply call “the Trials.”

“From the ‘Call to the Post’ trumpet fanfare to the last presentation of the awards the race is great, and the infield activities are like a big, multi-county neighborhood party,” she says. “Kids run and play, lovebirds snuggle, old friends catch up, and everyone has a jolly good time.”

The races are divided between quarter horses and thoroughbreds, with the former running about 450 yards and the latter charging the whole way around the one-mile oval. Leslee Spivey of the Williamsburg HomeTown Chamber of Commerce recommends first-time attendees simply bring a lawn chair and find a good spot inside the rails of the 12-acre infield to see the action.

Tailgating is one of the great traditions at the race. Vehicles are allowed on the infield and along the rail, so every year locals scramble to buy the best spaces on a



MICHAELE DUKE

At King’s Tree Trials, the competition among tailgaters for most elaborate spread isn’t official, but it’s fierce.

first-come, first-served basis. Then they compete to see who can put out the most elaborate spread, usually featuring Williamsburg County barbecue, of course.

Debby McCutchen and her husband, Bobby, say it took some persuasion by Treme before they agreed to host the races as a way to showcase the area's equestrian heritage, but they've enjoyed it every year. "We held the first one in 1996 and have never had a reason not to do it since," she says. "It's a lot of work behind the scenes, but it's a really nice way to see everyone come on out here and get together and have a good time."

MARION DUPONT SCOTT COLONIAL CUP

Saturday, Nov. 13

LOCATION: Springdale Race Course, Camden

GATES OPEN: 9 a.m.

POST TIMES: 12:30 p.m. for the first of either six or seven races, depending on entries received. Races run 35 minutes apart.

GENERAL ADMISSION: \$20 in advance, \$30 after Oct. 30

FOR MORE INFORMATION on restricted parking, grandstand boxes and clubhouse packages: (803) 432-6513 or (800) 780-8117, carolina-cup.org

Camden has been synonymous with horse racing since the Carolina Cup began in 1930. Its fall counterpart, the Marion duPont Scott Colonial Cup, began in 1970 and itself has become one of the most important stops on the national steeplechase circuit.

Marion duPont Scott was the chemical company heiress, of course, who married Hollywood heartthrob Randolph Scott (known best for his early 1950s westerns) and made Camden her part-time home for decades. She bought Springdale Race Course as a training ground for some of the wintering champions and helped established Camden as an equestrian capital. Upon her passing in 1983, she deeded the 600-acre property to the state of South Carolina. A nonprofit board now operates it and the nearby National Steeplechase Museum.

While slightly less formal than the spring race, more than 10,000 people attend the annual fall running "dressed in everything from Gucci to blue jeans," says Teri Leigh Teed, the assistant director of the Carolina Cup Racing Association (CCRA). In keeping with that informality, one of the favorite Colonial Cup traditions is the Jack Russell terrier races, staged between the steeplechase runs. Carousel and wagon rides also are favorites for the kids, and medieval knights will be parading before the grandstand as part of the show.

As this year's race coincides with Veterans Day, the CCRA is providing 3,000 free tickets to military personnel and there will be displays of military equipment produced in the Palmetto State. The Army's Golden Knights



PERRY BAKER



Tailgating with good company and great food adds to the pleasure of watching the horses pound the courses at the Colonial Cup.

parachute team also has been invited. Teed said the Lugoff-Elgin American Legion has donated 600 flags to line the road leading to the track, and a local chorale group will perform patriotic songs during the pre-race show.

Purchase your general admission tickets before Oct. 30 and you can get in for just \$20. Deep-pocketed attendees can spring for infield parking spaces that begin at \$135 and go up to \$265 for the front row by the paddocks. Grandstand seats cost \$135 each or \$625 for a six-seat package, which includes lunch and parking.

"I tell people coming for the first time to just pay general admission, walk on into the infield or generally get as close to the finish line as you can. It's an oval with a lot of different courses on that oval, so there are terrific viewpoints all along the different areas of the track," Teed says. "And over by the paddocks, you can watch the jockeys come out and saddle the horses, too. That all just adds to the interest and fun of this great event." ☺

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STATE PARK PROFILE

Paris Mountain State Park

WHEN THE WORKERS of the Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC) were cutting trails and cobbling together the stone buildings of Paris Mountain State Park in the 1930s, it's unlikely that anyone envisioned a day when South Carolinians would lace up expensive shoes and mount rugged bicycles in order to race one another across the scenic terrain.

Times change, and thanks to a convenient location just six miles north of bustling downtown Greenville, trail-runners and mountain bikers have made the 1,540-acre retreat and its 14 miles of trails one of the state's epicenters for outdoor athletics. In fact, on Nov. 6, the park will host

an 11K trail race, the third and final event in the 2010 XTerra Paris Mountain Trail Series (for information visit greenvilletrackclub.com).

Of course, you don't have to break a sweat to enjoy Paris Mountain. There are eight trails within the park, ranging from easy to strenuous, and some are reserved just for hikers. The park also contains four lakes, picnic facilities, campgrounds and even a stone amphitheater for live music performances. One of the most popular attractions in the summer months is Lake Placid, a 15-acre recreational pond near the park entrance. Fishing



PHOTOS: PERRY BAKER

From pleasant lakeside strolls to rugged competitive mountain biking, Paris Mountain State Park offers activities for everyone.

for bass, crappie and bream, as well as swimming, boating and guided nature hikes of the shore, are all offered in season.

Along with the amphitheater, many of the rustic stone structures built by the CCC are still in use today, as are dams built by the Paris Mountain Water Company in the 1880s, earning the park a spot on the National Register of Historic Places. The newly renovated Park Center also features

SCGardener

BY BOB POLOMSKI

Replanting irises for better blooms

Q I've been growing bearded irises for quite some time, but over the last couple of years they have hardly bloomed. Is there something I can do?

A Your irises are probably overcrowded and need to be divided and replanted.

Dig up the clumps and separate the rhizomes, those horizontally creeping underground stems. With a sharp knife, divide each one into sections, making sure that each piece has at least one bud or fan of leaves. Cut the young rhizomes away from the older sections and discard the older pieces and any sections that are undersized or diseased.

Note any rhizomes that are riddled with holes or completely hollowed out, as these are sure signs that iris



borers—the bane of bearded and Japanese irises—are at work in your garden. Before you replant the rhizomes, comb the soil carefully and remove any shiny, brownish-black pupal cases to prevent an outbreak of hungry, iris-chomping moth larvae.

Replant the bearded irises in a sunny, well-drained location. Dig the hole 8 to 12 inches deep, then form a cone of soil in the center, making it high enough so the rhizome will be resting just above ground level on clay soils. Spread the roots around the top of the cone, then press them firmly into the soil. Space the divisions about

12 to 18 inches apart. Finally, water the young plants to settle soil around the roots, and you can expect most, if not all, of your newly divided irises to bloom next spring. ☺

BOB POLOMSKI, PH.D., is a *Clemson Extension horticulturist*.

For more information about growing irises in your garden, visit the **Clemson Extension Home & Garden Information Center on the Web at hgic.clemson.edu** and use the search function to find fact sheet #1167.



historic exhibits, and the Wayside Wanderer program encourages visitors to seek out the 15 historical markers scattered throughout the park.

Paris Mountain State Park is open daily from 8 a.m. to 9 p.m., during daylight saving time. Winter hours are 8 a.m. to 6 p.m. Admission is \$2 for adults, \$1.25 for seniors and free for ages 15 and younger. For more information and directions to the park, visit southcarolinaparks.com and click on the "Park Finder" link in the upper left corner, or call (864) 244-5565.

Outdoor Tips

October winners

RECYCLING T-SHIRTS I bought a hanging basket that came without the coco liner, so I tried to think of something around the house that would keep the soil in and absorb water. I cut up an old brown T-shirt along the seams and used the back panel of the shirt. It worked great.

SHANNON McLEMORE, AIKEN

SANDSPUR REMOVAL To save your fingers from the pricks of sandspurs, use a fork. Slide the fork prongs under the sandspur and between the material it is attached to, then lift off the sandspur. No more pricked fingers!

CARLA SHULER, ANDERSON

Send us tips!

Readers whose original tips are published will receive a copy of *Wild Fare & Wise Words*, a collection of recipes and writing from the great outdoors.

Send entries with name and mailing address to: Outdoor Tips, South Carolina Living, 808 Knox Abbott Drive, Cayce SC 29033 or outdoors@scliving.coop.



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PHOTOS COURTESY OF BROOKGREEN GARDENS



Hérons in the swamps, "Fighting Stallions" by Anna Hyatt Huntington, and the 250-year-old trees of Live Oak Allee are among the attractions at Brookgreen Gardens.

A not-so-secret garden

A VISIT TO BROOKGREEN GARDENS, the 300-acre sculpture garden, nature preserve and zoo near Murrells Inlet, is always a feast for the eyes, but this month the park has outdone itself with a new display of world-class sculpture and the otherworldly beauty of hundreds of butterflies.

Until Oct. 31, the Rainey Sculpture Pavilion at Brookgreen is the exclusive home of the National Sculpture Society's 77th Annual Awards Exhibition, a juried show featuring works from 50 leading artists. Hosting the event is quite a coup for South Carolina, but it wouldn't surprise the park's founders, Archer Milton Huntington and his wife, the renowned sculptor Anna Hyatt Huntington. The couple created Brookgreen in 1931 to be a showplace for manmade and natural beauty. Today, it is a National Historic Landmark as the country's first public sculpture

garden, and it is the permanent home to more than 1,200 works by 350 sculptors. The grounds themselves are regarded as one of the nation's most beautiful botanical displays and cover a diverse mix of forested swamps, salt marsh, sandy ridges and fresh tidal swamps that were once home to four coastal plantations.

Fall is an ideal time to visit Brookgreen. There is plenty of color with roses, swamp sunflower, tea olives, jasmine and chrysanthemums still blooming and "the animals in the Lowcountry Zoo are a little more active because it is not as hot," said Helen Benso, Brookgreen's vice president for marketing. "You will also see wild turkeys all around the grounds this time of year, not just in the zoo."

The zoo's newest attraction, the Whispering Wings Butterfly Experience, is another reason to visit this month. The walk-through exhibit, filled with tropical plants and hundreds of butterflies, closes for winter after Oct. 31, but until then, it's open daily from 10 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. and features a pupae emergence room where visitors can observe the transformation from chrysalis to adult butterflies.

Other special attractions include interpret-led excursions to archaeological sites on the property, boat rides through the abandoned rice field creeks and access to the Lowcountry Trail, which tells the history of the old coastal plantations. ☺

GetThere

BROOKGREEN GARDENS is located at 1931 Brookgreen Drive, Murrells Inlet (on U.S. 17 between Murrells Inlet and Pawley's Island).

HOURS: 9:30 a.m. to 5 p.m. daily, closed Christmas Day.

ADMISSION: \$12 for adults, \$10 for seniors, \$6 for children ages 4 to 12. Children ages 3 and under are admitted free. Tickets are good for seven consecutive days. A 30-minute tour inside the Whispering Wings display is an additional \$3 for adults, \$2 for children.

DETAILS: (843) 235-6000, (800) 849-1931; brookgreen.org.

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Falling for October treats



ISTOCKPHOTO/DIRKR

BLACK MISSION FIG APPETIZER

SERVES 6

- 1/3 pound ripe black mission figs, halved
- 1/2 cup dark brown sugar
- 1/2 cup balsamic vinegar
- 1/2 cup blue cheese

Preheat oven to 350 degrees.

Place fig halves cut-side down on baking sheet. Roast for 20 minutes. Remove from oven, turn to cut-side up and dot each half with brown sugar and balsamic vinegar. Return to oven and continue to roast for 10 minutes.

Remove from oven and sprinkle each half with blue cheese. Return to oven for 3 to 5 minutes or until the blue cheese begins to soften. Change oven setting to “broil” for the last minute of roasting time. Serve immediately.

KAREN WILLIAMS, HILTON HEAD ISLAND

BAKED HERBED SWEET POTATO WEDGES

SERVES 8

- 4 medium sweet potatoes (about 1 pound each), peeled
- 1/3 cup vegetable oil
- 1 teaspoon dried rosemary
- 1 teaspoon dried sage
- 1 teaspoon dried thyme
- 1 teaspoon coarse salt
- 1/2 teaspoon black pepper

Cut peeled sweet potatoes into quarters, then slice quarters into wedges (each potato yields about 12 wedges). Soak wedges in cold water, completely submerged, for about one hour. Drain and pat dry. In a large bowl, stir together vegetable oil, dried herbs, salt and pepper, then marinate wedges for 30 minutes.

Preheat oven to 400 degrees.

Cover a lipped cookie sheet with aluminum foil and arrange the marinated wedges on it. Bake for 30 minutes.

CHRISTINA BRUDERER, HILTON HEAD ISLAND



INA PETERS



RYTA JACOBS

BUTTERED RUM AND CIDER GLAZED MINI PORK ROAST

SERVES 6

- 1/2 teaspoon ground nutmeg
- 1/2 teaspoon ground allspice
- 1/2 teaspoon coarse salt
- 1/4 teaspoon black pepper
- 2 1-pound pork tenderloins, each cut cross-wise into 3 pieces
- 2 tablespoons butter, softened, divided
- 1 tablespoon extra virgin olive oil
- 3/4 cup apple cider
- 1 teaspoon rum extract (or 3 tablespoons rum)
- 1 tablespoon light brown sugar, packed

Preheat oven to 350 degrees.

Combine nutmeg, allspice, salt and pepper in a small bowl. Rub spice mixture over all sides of tenderloins. In a large skillet, heat 1 tablespoon of the butter and olive oil over medium heat. Increase heat to medium-high and brown

Send us recipes!

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tenderloins 3 to 4 minutes on all sides. Place pork tenderloins on foil-lined baking sheet (can be covered and refrigerated up to 8 hours ahead).

To make the cider glaze, combine cider, rum extract and brown sugar in a small bowl. Remove drippings from skillet and reheat skillet until hot. Pour in cider mixture and bring to a boil until slightly thickened (bottom of skillet will show when stirring). Whisk in remaining butter and bring to a boil. Remove from heat.

Roast tenderloins 10 minutes, then increase oven temperature to 375 degrees. Brush with some of the cider glaze, then roast an additional 10 to 15 minutes or until internal temperature reaches 145 degrees. Cover loosely with foil and let stand 10 minutes. Pour pan juices into remaining glaze, boil 1 minute, then pour over tenderloins.

KATHERINE PUTNAM, EFFINGHAM

Instead of "one can" or "two packages," specify "one 12-ounce can" or "two 8-ounce packages." Note the number of servings or yield. Recipes are not tested. Send recipes to South Carolina Living, 808 Knox Abbott Drive, Cayce, SC 29033, by e-mail to recipe@scliving.coop, or by fax to (803) 739-3041.

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MUSIC AND FOOD GO TOGETHER like shrimp and grits, so when you walk into Mac's on Main in the heart of downtown Columbia, don't be surprised if you see chef Barry "Fatback" Walker up on stage, Stratocaster in hand, performing an original jazz number from his latest CD, "Cobbler Man."



Barry "Fatback" Walker is at home both in the kitchen and on stage.



Thanksgiving meal, starting with the stuffing and the greens, then moving on to the turkey and the whole meal. Not only was it a lot of fun, but I was learning my mom's secrets at the same time."

A buffet menu offering a choice of one meat and three side dishes is served in the daytime and a full dinner menu is offered in the evenings. The most popular dinner entrée is shrimp and grits, spiced up just right with andouille sausage and Cajun

LOWCOUNTRY SHRIMP AND GRITS

SERVES 4

Chef Walker recommends listening to tracks 6, 10 and 13 of Fatback and the Groove Band's CD "Anthology" while cooking shrimp and grits.

GRITS

- 2 cups Adluh Stone Ground Yellow Grits
- 4 cups water
- 2 teaspoons salt

Bring 4 cups of water to a boil. Combine grits and salt. Reduce heat to very low and simmer for 30 minutes. Stir until well blended. Taste it. If you like it—go with it. If grits thicken too much, add more cold water.

SHRIMP

- 2 ounces extra virgin olive oil
- 1 medium yellow onion, chopped
- 1 medium green bell pepper, chopped
- 1 medium red pepper, chopped
- 8 ounces andouille sausage, cooked
- 2 ounces Cajun spice
- 28 large peeled shrimp per serving
- 1 10-ounce can of Campbell's Beefy Mushroom Condensed Soup
- 1 10-ounce soup can of water

Place olive oil in saucepan over medium heat. Add onions, peppers and andouille sausage. Sauté until onions are soft. For a little spicy kick, add the Cajun spice. Add shrimp and sauté until shrimp are done. Add mushroom soup and water to sauce pan.

Serve grits on the bottom of plate. Spoon shrimp topping over grits.

Before he and his wife Susan, aka "Ms. Mac," decided to open their combination music club/restaurant in 2000, Walker spent decades perfecting his musical chops as a guitarist and vocalist. He still plays regularly with his local troupe, Fatback and the Groove Band, and has been known to sit in when popular touring acts including Soul Patrol and Daddy Blue Band perform.

But as passionate as Walker is about music, he's even more passionate about good, southern cooking. The menu is based on family recipes handed down from Viola Walker, the chef's mom, and it includes regional specialties from across the Palmetto State—Saluda Sautéed Cabbage, Johns Island Fried Shrimp and Florence Fried Chicken, to name just a few.

"I graduated from the Viola Walker School of Cooking—cooking my mom's way," Walker said. "When I was a young boy, my mother's motto was 'Never depend on a woman to cook for you.' When I turned 16, I began cooking part of the family's



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seasoning, but nobody leaves Mac's without having a dessert—or three. The restaurant is known for its peach cobbler ("World Famous," according to the menu), but the blackberry cobbler and the banana pudding are also popular. And if you need to satisfy your sweet tooth between visits, Walker's cobbler is now sold in the freezer section of Piggy Wiggly supermarkets. ☺

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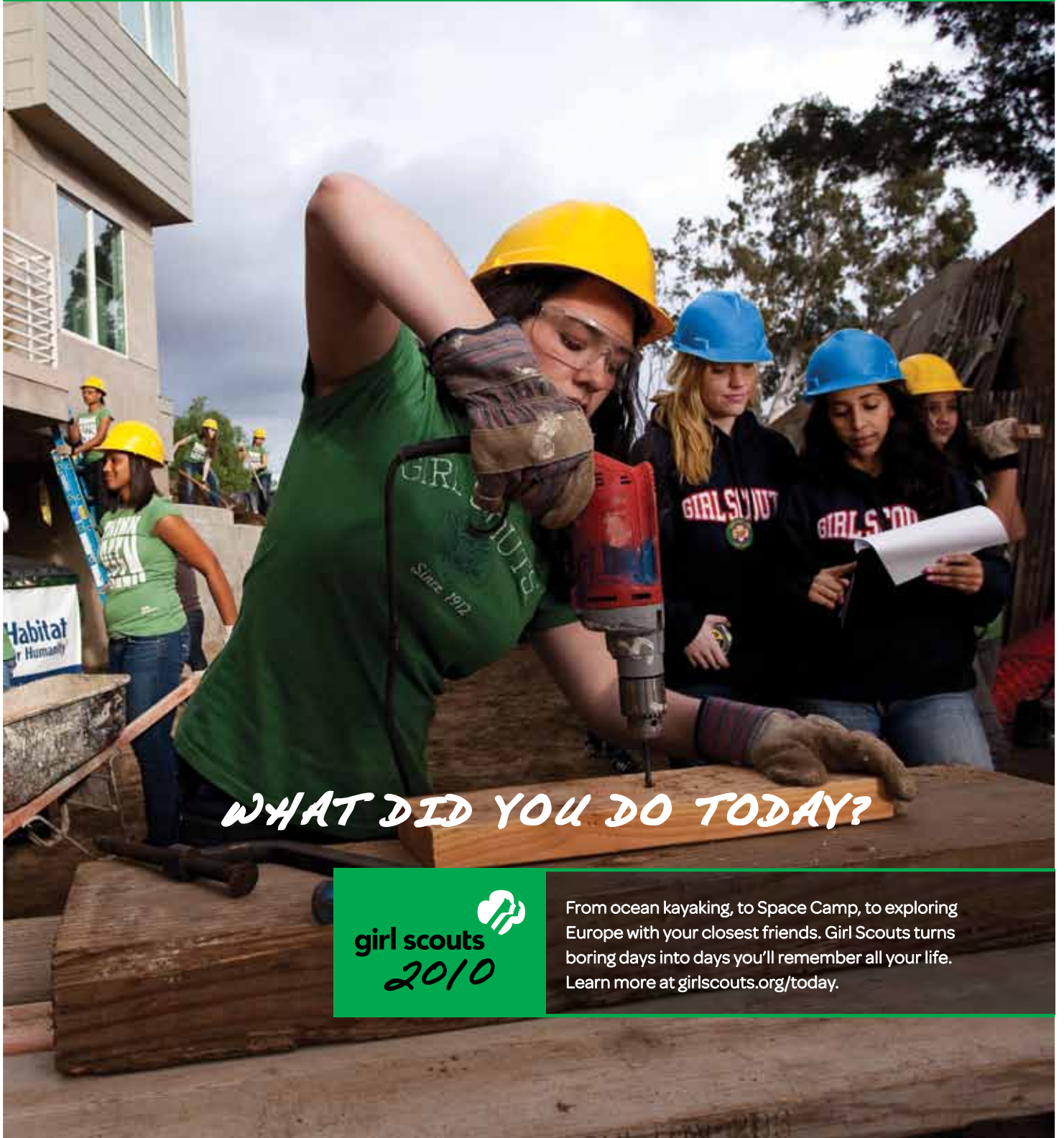
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South Carolina Living

The cure for the common mutt

MOST OF THE TIME, I don't get invited to hang out with the beautiful people at swanky A-list events. But that's OK, because my dog does. Until he gets his driver's license, I get to tag along.

Romeo, my tall, dark, handsome mutt, just received an embossed invitation (with his name in gold calligraphy) to Paris-the-schnoodle's third birthday bash. He loves her parties because the caterer always serves bacon and chicken-liver cheesecake. It's his favorite.

Oh yes, I said "caterer."

Paris is a designer dog who weighs about six pounds and owns more jewelry than Joan Rivers. She also has a wardrobe of gem-studded leather leashes accented with gold hardware, just in case some national emergency requires her to walk.

Paris travels exclusively by shoulder-driven purse—pink, sequined and generously trimmed with boa. It's unlikely her pristine paws have ever touched anything but shag carpet. In fact, I've never seen her legs. But she must have them because her owner swears the price of a good French-tip pedicure "is going insane, Darling."

I'm not implying that Paris is spoiled, although she does have a massage therapist and a blog. But that's the norm for this crowd. Their definition of animal cruelty is dry kibble.

Of course, today's designer dog is much more than an upgraded mutt.



It's the most brilliant marketing concept in the history of dog-dom. Just take a popular breed, such as a poodle—which would gladly mate with a toaster oven—arrange a romantic evening with a Yorkie or a Labrador, and you've got yourself a designer dog worth more than my first car.

At one time, mutts were just unidentified barking objects. You could pick one up on any street corner for next to nothing. But now, anything-oodles go for big bucks. In Paris' case, we're talking \$1,950 for a purse ornament that will never fetch slippers, find bombs, pull a sled or accompany your significant other

on a hunting trip. (Paris wouldn't be caught dead in one of those dreadful orange vests.)

Actually, Romeo doesn't do that stuff either. But investment-wise—since one Paris equals 38 Romeos—I got much more under-achieving couch potato for my buck.

I suspect that Paris' security detail didn't run a thorough background check on my four-legged bargain, or he wouldn't be wolfing down her Swedish meatballs as we speak.

Can you keep a secret? Romeo's last known address was the pound. He doesn't exactly fit the designer doggy-mold. Actually, he's more of a Heinz 57. He could be part poodle, like Paris. Or he might be part bichon. He could be part buffalo. Who knows? He's a mutt.

But he's a classy mutt. He's home-schooled—never enrolled in doggie day camp—and doesn't need beef-flavored Prozac to behave, unlike some other party guests. Except for a strong romantic attraction to bare shins, he's a perfect gentleman.

It's just too bad nobody warned the caterer to wear slacks. ☺

JAN A. IGOE shares her Horry County home with several recycled canines. Her pack of mutts includes Gizmo, a terrier-mix. Her daughter's adopted mastiff, Clyde, is a frequent guest. You can share your thoughts and column ideas with Jan by writing to HumorMe@SCLiving.coop.



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| 35 | \$1.30 | \$1.08 |
| 55 | \$3.20 | \$2.53 |
| 65 | \$5.36 | \$4.14 |
| 75 | \$10.23 | \$7.64 |
| 85 | \$19.77 | \$16.52 |

- Does not include policy fee. Minimums may apply. Smoker and non-smoker rates.

PLAN 2: Unbelievable Medicare Supplement Rates!

We have the most competitive Medicare Supplement Rates anywhere!

Please check Plan #2 for more information and rates. Automatic Claim Filing included at no extra cost.

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